

before him had filled. In 1769 he presented himself to the voters of Albemarle County as candidate for the House of Burgesses, an office which had also been held by his father. In accordance with the democratic custom of the time, the candidate went from voter to voter and made personal solicitations. He was elected as a matter of course. Indeed, he may be said to have inherited the seat of his father.

It was a critical and troublous period when he took his seat. Throughout the colonies there was a growing distrust of George III. and Parliament. Virginia imagined herself loyal, but outward forms apart, she was drifting- with the general tide away from the home government. The great proprietors, the royal officers, and the clergy, partly through interest, partly through affection, were unshaken in their fidelity to the old order of things; but there were appearing- upon the scene leaders who, like Otis and Adams in the north, were determined to resist to the last the encroachments of the crown. Jefferson fell in with those threatening- revolution as naturally as a duck takes to water. He liked rebellion for its own sake. It cleared up the political atmosphere, he thought; a country without a rebellion,* say every century, he regarded as being in a dangerous way. Among his colleagues in the legislature were George Washington and Patrick Henry. These three men conducted the Revolution in Virginia. Washington was its sword, Henry its tongue, and Jefferson its pen. At the opening of the first session the member from Albemarle drafted a reply to the Governor's address, but his effort was rejected as being deficient in both style and contents. The young man was doubtless mortified, but his propensity to draw up addresses, constitutions, etc., was deeply rooted, and we shall find him trying his hand again upon the first and all succeeding occasions.

On the Thursday after the opening of the session the House passed resolutions which, after denying the right of taxation

*See Rebellion, page 354.